

III. REMARKS

Claims 1 and 4-22 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 1, 8, 13 and 18 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Applicants do not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections and reserve the right to present specific arguments regarding any rejected claims not specifically addressed. Furthermore, Applicants reserve the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the original claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of this Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116(b) because the Amendment: (a) places the application in condition for allowance as discussed below; (b) does not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration; and (c) places the application in better form for appeal. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of this Amendment.

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 4-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Netscan (<http://web.archive.org/web/20021001103129/netscan.research.microsoft.com/Static/Default.asp>), hereinafter "Netscan." Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection in light of the following remarks.

A. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1 AND 4-22 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112

The Office has asserted that claims 1 and 4-22 contain subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant

art that the inventors, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. Specifically, the Office objects to the limitation "...wherein at least one of the desired interactivity metrics provided by the potential user measures an interactivity, which is unrelated to a content of information posted, between users in the collaborative space." The Office states that the specification "does not mention or suggest that the metric is unrelated to the content of the information posted." Office Action at p. 2. Applicants respectfully disagree. As the Office acknowledges, paragraphs 0026-0028 discloses how the metric measures interactivity between current users. In fact, throughout the specification, it is clear that it is the interactivity between users that is measured by the metric, not the content of the information posted. As such, Applicants submit that this limitation is disclosed in the specification.

The Office further objects to the term "appropriate group" in claims 1, 8, 13 and 18 as a relative term which allegedly renders the claim indefinite. Applicants have amended claims 1, 8, 13 and 18 to delete the limitation "appropriate" from those claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

B. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1 and 4-22 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

With respect to amended claim 1, Applicants submit that Netscan fails to disclose each and every element of the claimed invention, including "categorizing the collaborative space into one of a plurality of groups based on the interactivity metrics." (See claim 1 and as similarly recited by claims 8, 13 and 18).

The Office states that Netscan reads on the claims because when groups in Netscan are re-ranked, they are being "categorized." The Office goes on to state that under a broad

interpretation of Netscan, the groups can be categorized into at least two categories, the top and bottom. Applicants respectfully disagree that this categorization is *based on the interactivity metrics*. Netscan teaches a number of newsgroups, for example, that may be sorted in an ascending or descending order. If a user clicks on the metric for "number of posts," all of the newsgroups are simply re-ranked. To this extent, Netscan fails to provide a plurality of groups into which collaborative spaces may be categorized based on interactivity metrics.

In contrast, in the claimed invention, includes "...categorizing the collaborative space into one of a plurality of groups based on the interactivity metrics." As such, instead of simply listing all of the collaborative spaces in a modified order as does Netscan, the claimed invention categorizes the collaborative spaces into groups based on the interactivity metrics of the various collaborative spaces. Thus, Applicants submit that Netscan fails to disclose each and every element of claim 1 and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection. Since similar amendments have been made to independent claims 8, 13 and 18, withdrawal of the rejection of those claims is also requested.

With respect to all of the dependent claims, Applicants herein incorporate the arguments presented above with respect to the independent claims from which the claims depend. The dependent claims are believed to be allowable based on the above arguments, as well as for their own additional features.

IV. CONCLUSION

In addition to the above arguments, Applicants submit that each of the pending claims is patentable for one or more additional unique features. To this extent, Applicants do not acquiesce to the Office's interpretation of the claimed subject matter or the references used in rejecting the claimed subject matter. Additionally, Applicants do not acquiesce to the Office's combinations and modifications of the various references or the motives cited for such combinations and modifications. These features and the appropriateness of the Office's combinations and modifications have not been separately addressed herein for brevity. However, Applicants reserve the right to present such arguments in a later response should one be necessary.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner require anything further to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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